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UNCLAS ALMATY 000001

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

FOR S/ES-O/CMS, EUR/CACEN (JMUDGE)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA TRIPWIRES

REF: STATE 219189

1. (SBU) Summary: The Embassy Almaty Emergency Action Committee Pandemic Influenza (PI) Subcommittee has met to develop tripwires and responses per Action Request in Reftel. Participants in the PI Subcommittee include the DCM and representatives from MED, CDC, ADM, CON, RSO, USAID, PEACE CORPS, PAS AND DAO.

2. (SBU) Introduction:

-Host country medical facilities in the event of an outbreak: For the purpose of planning for pandemic influenza, post considers that Kazakhstan's medical treatment facilities will not be available for use by official Americans. This is due to anticipated heavy use by host country citizens affected by the pandemic and a standard of care in local facilities that falls so far below that of the USA that its use should not be considered.

-General assessment of host country's public health system's ability to respond to an AI/PI outbreak: The KZ medical, veterinary and wildlife sectors are capable of detecting suspected disease based upon clinical signs and history. However, the medical sector is not capable of detecting a new strain of influenza by laboratory testing. Current diagnostic procedures and equipment can detect cases of influenza, but cannot differentiate particular strains. Many of the GOK Ministries, including Agriculture, Education and Science, and Health have polymerase chain reaction (PCR) equipment; but PCR tests specific to H5N1 are not yet approved by FDA or USDA (or Kazakh entities) for diagnosis of disease in people or animals. During the poultry outbreak in August 2005 (Golubovka village in Pavlodar oblast), the Kazakh Scientific Research Agricultural Institute in Otar provided animal specimens; the Republican Sanitary Epidemiological Service provided human specimens of possible exposed individuals to the NAMRU-3 laboratory in Cairo. CDC collected 175 specimens from individuals in the village where H5N1 was identified. These specimens were subsequently sent to CDC in Atlanta through an agreement with the Government of Kazakhstan.

-Post's ability to shelter in place: Post has addressed all items listed in REF, para 8 in preparing for pandemic influenza. As such, post has determined that it can shelter in place for a period of two to four weeks.

3. (SBU) Tripwires and responses:

Tripwire 1: Spike in number and broadening geographic spread of animal-to-human transmission cases in Kazakhstan.

Actions:

- a. EAC Pandemic Influenza Subcommittee convenes to confirm that the tripwire has been crossed.
- b. Release warning announcement to Mission personnel and warden message to American citizens.
- c. Restrict mission personnel from travel to affected geographic regions.
- d. Have evacuation plans for both the well and ill.
- e. Prepare talking points for domestic and international press.
- f. Provide detailed briefing to Embassy/Consulate staff.
- g. Communicate pertinent information to the embassy community by way of venues such as town hall meetings, the embassy web site and newsletter articles.

Tripwire 2: Confirmed, sustained human-to-human transmission anywhere in the world indicating a mutation in the virus. This is particularly significant if there are multiple, geographically diverse clusters, or if a cluster occurs in a major transit hub.

Actions:

- a. EAC Pandemic Influenza Subcommittee convenes to confirm that the tripwire has been crossed.
- b. Institute screening practices for all visitors to USG

facilities.

- c. Mandatory sick leave for any employee who shows any flu symptoms or has a family member with flu symptoms. This will be monitored by the Health Unit.
- d. Issue public announcement to the American community.
- e. Prepare talking points for domestic and international press.
- f. Department of State makes public announcement regarding risks of travel to the region.
- g. Restrict official and unofficial travel to affected countries or areas.

Tripwire 3: Sustained human-to-human transmission in Kazakhstan. This is particularly significant if there are multiple, geographically diverse clusters, or if a cluster occurs in an urban area and/or is not safely isolated.

Actions:

- a. EAC Pandemic Influenza Subcommittee convenes to confirm that the tripwire has been crossed.
- b. Provide Mission briefings for American and LES staff and dependents, by email or telephone.
- c. Consular section to reduce operations to emergency services only.
- d. Coordinate with CA/OCS on issuance of guidance (public announcement or travel warning) urging American citizens to defer all non-emergency travel to Kazakhstan.
- e. Consider authorized or ordered departure at the discretion of the Chief of Mission and the EAC Implement administrative leave for non-emergency FSNs.
- f. If AD/OD is not permissible, instruct all non-emergency American and LES staff to remain at home on administrative leave.
- g. Mandatory sick leave for any employee who shows any flu symptoms or has a family member with flu symptoms. This will be monitored by the Health Unit.
- h. Consider home quarantine of any staff and dependents who have been in contact with a person confirmed to have pandemic influenza infection and implement home monitoring.
- i. Limit venues of human to human contact (implement social distancing), such as school closures and the cancellation of community gatherings.
- j. Consider delivery of groceries and other essentials to quarantined residences.
- k. Strong statement and enforcement that ill employees must not come to work.
- l. Divide MSG detachment into two separate and independently quartered entities to help ensure continued perimeter security and safeguarding of classified materials.
- m. Plan for home visits to sick individuals who receive care under the Embassy Health Unit.
- n. Restrict visitor access to Mission facilities. Screening to consist of posters and written questionnaires that deny entry to visitors with symptoms of influenza.
- o. Public announcement to the American community. In coordination with the department, prepare talking points for domestic and international press.
- p. Mission personnel restricted to essential in-country travel only.
- q. Deny country clearance for international visitors, unless specifically cleared by the COM.
- r. Post will make provisions for sheltering in place for official visitors stranded at post.

Alternative Tripwire: A Mission employee or eligible family member develops Avian Influenza, in the absence of a broader outbreak per tripwires 1, 2, or 3 above.

Actions:

- a. Treat the victim. Medevac if possible.
- b. Disinfect victim's place of work.
- c. Administer oseltamivir (Tamiflu) to close contacts.

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